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### **White Paper Lake Eufaula Federal Advisory Committee**

***Lake Eufaula Association's mission is to "Unite the citizens and business interest of the Lake Eufaula area in order to educate the general public to the need for tourism in the area and for the improvement of the general economy."***

#### ***Organization History***

Roots of Lake Eufaula Association (LEA) run deep. Eufaula Dam Association was organized in 1948 to lead the drive for a dam to be built below the confluence of the North and South Canadian Rivers. That association reorganized in the mid 1950s after being dormant for a few years, when the US Army Corps of Engineers revealed a feasible site for the dam structure. The name of the association was changed to the Eufaula Lake Development Association (ELDA) in 1962 to continue the efforts of making water transportation in Oklahoma possible. ELDA was the group that led the dedication ceremonies for Lake Eufaula Dam September 25, 1964. Once again the group reorganized into the Lake Eufaula Association in 1971. Since that time, LEA has worked toward obtaining the goals of the mission.

#### ***Organization Influences***

LEA has influenced and helped organize several important "causes" for the protection of tourism in the Lake Eufaula area. In 2004, LEA led the drive to prevent a "water pipeline" to Oklahoma City from Lake Eufaula waters. This was the beginning of Save Our Water, Inc. In 2008, LEA and other concerned organizations worked together to encourage the Muscogee Creek Nation to take over and maintain Fountainhead Golf Course. At the time, the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department planned to demolish the course and make it into RV campsites. In 2009, LEA established a billboard on Highway 69 to market and promote the lake. This was accomplished through a cooperative effort with the US Army Corps of Engineers. Repair and upgrades to Southpoint Boat Ramp was the project in 2013. LEA partnered with Nichols Marine Foundation to raise \$130,000 in order for the City of Eufaula to access a \$500,000 Oklahoma Wildlife Department grant. This enabled Eufaula Cove to continue to host numerous fishing tournaments throughout the year and ensure boaters had usable ramps in the City of Eufaula.

#### ***Sponsor Major Events***

Through the years LEA has sponsored or gathered sponsorship for many big events on the lake. In 1999, the first Golden Eagle Run, a poker run on the water, was established. It still occurs today and brings large numbers of people to the lake. Because Lake Eufaula is one of the top ten crappie fishing lakes, LEA has hosted numerous crappie tournaments such as Crappiethon, Crappie USA and most recently Crappie Masters. LEA also partnered with the City of McAlester

to bring a regional BASS Masters tournament in 2014. Also in 2014, LEA in cooperation with the US Army Corps of Engineers, Eufaula Middle School and several lake communities hosted the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of Eufaula Dam.

### ***Oklahoma Lakes and Countries Connection***

In 1972, the State of Oklahoma created regional marketing areas to promote and benefit the state's rural communities called the Multi County Associations. LEA is one of the organizations participating in this program through the Oklahoma Lakes and Countries Association. Through a matching funds program with state rules and regulations, LEA receives some legislative funding. Since this is a state program it allows LEA to be connected to the Oklahoma Department of Tourism and Recreation.



### ***Methods of Promotion***

In order to accomplish our purpose, LEA produces a 48 page Guide to Lake Eufaula annually. This is the official guide to the lake area. The guide is the primary promotional piece distributed at 15-20 travel shows in Oklahoma and other states each year. Other marketing strategies include print magazines, website, social media and a large distribution of the guide at target market destinations. The Lake Eufaula Tourist Information center is operated under the guidance of LEA. Marketing efforts prove to be effective as visitation to Lake Eufaula continues to grow. Please refer to graphics by Save Our Water for economic impact of tourism for Lake Eufaula.

### ***Lake Eufaula Advisory Committee objectives***

As a member of the LEAC committee, LEA's hope is to keep the recreation/tourism aspect in perspective. Lake Eufaula has many important purposes. The goal will be to develop/recommend a balanced operation plan to fit the needs of each purpose. LEA will work diligently to keep recreation in the forefront as a part of the pool management plan.